PROVINCE
OF
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Speech from the Throne

At The Opening of the

First Session

of the

Fifty-sixth General Assembly

of the Province of

Prince Edward Island

March 18th, 1983

THE HONOURABLE
JOSEPH AUBIN DOIRON

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE
OF
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

MADAME SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Since the Legislative Assembly last met, the membership of this House has undergone some changes as a result of the democratic process. I, personally, want to congratulate you, the new Members of this House for receiving the confidence of your fellow citizens. I am sure that you recognize that it is an honour to be a Member of this Assembly. It must be a source of pride to each of you when you consider the traditions and customs that are a part of this distinguished Assembly.

As Her Majesty's representative on Prince Edward Island, I look forward, as I am sure all Islanders do, to the forthcoming visit of their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales.

My Government wishes to express pleasure at the spirit of cooperation between the Federal and Provincial Governments. Our relationship is proving to be beneficial to the residents of Prince Edward Island.

MADAME L'ORATEUR ET MEMBRES DE L'ASSEMBLEE LEGISLATIVE:

Depuis la dernière séance de l'Assemblée législative, la formation de cette Chambre a subi quelques changements, résultat de notre processus démocratique. Je tiens personellement à féliciter les membres de cette Chambre d'avoir gagné la confiance de leurs concitoyens. Je suis certain que vous reconaissez tout l'honneur que renferme cette position qu'on vous a confiée. Sans doute, ça doit être une souce de grande fierté, pour chacun d'entre vous, de faire partie de cette honorable assemblée, si riche en coutumes et en traditions.

A titre de représentant de sa Majesté à l'Ile-du-Prince-Edouard, j'attends avec impatience la visite prochaine de leurs Altesses, le Prince et la Princesse de Galles. Je suis certain que tous les insulaires ont également hâte à cet événement.

Mon Government désire exprimer sa grande satisfaction à l'endroit de l'esprit de coopération qui reigne entre le gouvernement fédéral et le gouvernement provincial. Nos bons rapports s'avèrent profitables aux résidents de l'Ile-du-Prince-Edouard.

My Government has been aware for some time that history will record that this is a period of transition. It is a time of reassessment - a time for careful consideration and determined action. In all aspects of society, my Government finds itself dealing with the problems and the opportunities that arise during a transition period. While every year brings challenges, there have been numerous events during the past few years which will have tremendous influence on the way we live in Canada. These events were the start of trends that are shaking the foundations of our economic, social and Government institutions.

THE ECONOMY

Decades ago, Prince Edward Island was, to a great extent, a self-contained economy. Over the years, we have become more and more susceptible to outside forces. We are a part of a much broader economy. On the bright side, there appears to be some new economic factors at work that offer an improved chance of economic development over a number of years.

My Government feels that while Prince Edward Island previously has had disadvantages competing for manufacturing industries there are new industries developing with different characteristics that offer more hope.

Prince Edward Island Governments have historically found themselves fighting centralizing forces while attempting to have industries come to our Island. We also had built-in energy and transportation disadvantages.

Canadians are now finding that these same manufacturing industries are having difficulty competing. At the same time that hitherto cornerstone industries find themselves in economic disarray, a whole new set of industries are emerging based on new technologies.

These new technologies are forcing adjustments on all Canadians; Islanders are no exception. There is no doubt that these changes have created hardships. My Government is devoting its energies toward ensuring that the adjustments also provide new opportunities for Islanders. To accomplish this, it is working in three areas of economic improvement.

1. Ongoing programs that maintain present industries and jobs.
2. Direct Job Creation.
3. Ensuring that Prince Edward Island is a beneficiary, not a victim, of the major changes in our economic order.

These efforts will be elaborated on by appropriate Ministers during this Session. While my Government is looking to the future, it is not forgetting the farming, fisheries, tourism, forestry and manufactuing industries on Prince Edward Island that have served Islanders well over the years. Central to our economic strategy in the primary and manufacturing sector is an improved and more aggressive trade policy. My Ministers responsible for the various economic sectors will outline Government approaches in these areas.

SOCIAL

The major expenditures of Government revolve around those programs aimed directly at our social well-being rather than our economic circumstance. Here, too, my Government senses that we have reached a crossroads. Over the past number of years, Governments have allowed, and often encouraged, increased public dependence on a Government treasury believed to have unlimited resources. The result is that Governments around the world are faltering under the load of social programs of their own making.

My Government continues to create changes in this direction by developing policies that strengthen the natural support systems of family and community. There seems to be an increased awareness of the interdependence between these institutions and our societal health. My Government suggest that this should be promoted not discouraged. While pursuing these changes, my Government is aware that society will be judged by its treatment of the less fortunate.

My Government recognizes that during weak economic times, there could be a tendency toward more reliance on Government. While Governments must continue to provide stability, this must be accomplished with programs that create an independent attitude. In the area of education, my Government will encourage the increased involvement of parents in the education of their children.

GOVERNMENT

Governments across the continent are finding the roles that they have assumed in the past have created financial difficulties. The deficits necessary just to maintain the status quo have become a millstone as Governments try to adjust to new realities. No Government feels that it can afford any level of deficit which inhibits flexibility of future action and, indeed, drains the creative aspects of Government.

Federal and Provincial Governments have responded with restraint programs. The choice is to ignore the realities of increased debt for present and future generations or to reassess the role of Government. My Government will provide the leadership necessary during the next few years as new roles emerge for Government.

Restraint must not be seen as an end in itself. It must be recognized as a means of providing us with the flexibility to develop social and economic programs that improve the quality of life in our Province. We must be able to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

MADAME SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Legislative proposals will be introduced for your consideration affecting,

1. the School Act,
2. the Companies Act,
3. a Municipalities Act,
4. the Election Act,
5. the Pharmacy Act, and,
6. the Fire Prevention Act.

In addition to the measures specified, Honourable Members will be asked to consider a variety of legislative proposals.

MADAME SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

You will be asked to appropriate the funds required for the services and payments required by this Assembly.

The Public Accounts and the reports of the various departments and agencies for the year ending March 31, 1982, will be tabled for your information. The Interim Report, forecasting estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1983, and the Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1983, will also be presented for your consideration.

MADAME SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

May Divine Providence guide your deliberations.